

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Washington, DC 20208

Application for the Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant Program

Supported by the National Research Institutes

CFDA Number 84.305T

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: September 15, 2000

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Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information is 1850-0601. The time required to complete this information is estimated to average 15 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. **If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:** U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20208-5530.

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July 2000

Dear Colleague:

The Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant Program (FIS) is a competition for support of research applications that come from researchers and practitioners in universities, schools, and other institutions around the country, reflecting their sense of what is important and constructive to study. This year, we are announcing the schedule for two competitions that will be held in fiscal year 2001. We believe sponsoring two separate competitions will provide you with more flexibility in deciding when to submit applications. Please read the application package carefully as it contains important information about these competitions.

One of my goals for my tenure as the Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement is to improve peer review of submitted research applications. As part of our ongoing improvement efforts, we are establishing content-specific panels to review FIS submissions, with the expectation that the work of such panels will lead to greater consistency of reviews over time. Again, please review the application packages for more information and to determine which of these content areas best matches your application's focus.

As you consider whether and how to respond to this research announcement, please keep in mind that:

- We will be open to applications that focus on issues that span the themes of OERI's five National Research Institutes, particularly given that some of the most enduring questions do not fall neatly or uniquely into a single substantive domain. The five institutes are the National Institute on Student Achievement, Curriculum, and Assessment; the National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students; the National Institute on Educational Governance, Finance, Policymaking, and Management; the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education; and the National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning.
- In addition to supporting applications in well-established lines of inquiry, we are also interested in investigations aimed at building new theories or testing and applying new methodologies. Indeed, we hope we can encourage greater attention to the theoretical perspectives associated with the proposed research. We think this is one useful way of balancing the need to solve immediate problems with the need to advance our understanding of things that will be of longer term value to decisionmakers and opinion leaders.

- We are hopeful that some of the proposed research efforts will include new collaborations and partnerships with the field, both to broaden the perspectives brought to bear on the research and to increase the odds that the knowledge gleaned from these research activities is valued and used.
- Collaborations across disciplines are also encouraged as we believe these interactions will pay dividends in terms of the contributions different research traditions and theoretical perspectives can make to investigation of specific questions.
- In addition, OERI is interested in sponsoring studies focused on the ideas for further research presented in several recent national reports. Important recommendations on future research needs were offered in a report released by the National Reading Panel of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, *Teaching Children to Read*, and in several reports from the National Research Council -- *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*; *How People Learn*; *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*; and *Improving Schooling for Language-Minority Children*.

On behalf of the staff and the OERI National Educational Research Policy and Priorities Board, let me extend in advance our thanks for your thoughtful responses to this research announcement.

Sincerely,

C. KENT MCGUIRE

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

(CFDA No.: 84.305T)

Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Field-Initiated Studies (FIS) Education Research Grant Program

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2001.

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM: The Field-Initiated Studies (FIS) Education Research Grant Program awards grants to conduct education research in which topics and methods of study are generated by investigators.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Institutions of higher education; State and local education agencies; public and private organizations, institutions, and agencies; and individuals.

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE: July 21, 2000.

Application packages will be available by mail and electronically on the World Wide Web at the following sites:

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/FIS/>

www.ed.gov/GrantApps/

DEADLINE FOR TRANSMITTAL OF APPLICATIONS: September 15, 2000.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF LETTERS OF INTENT: August 18, 2000.

NOTE: A Letter of Intent is optional, but encouraged, for each application. The Letter of Intent is for OERI planning purposes and will not be used in the evaluation of the application.

Instructions for the Letter of Intent will be in the application package.

TENTATIVE AWARD DATE: December 15, 2000.

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDS: \$15 million for two FY 2001 FIS cycles.

The estimated amount of funds available for new awards is based on the Administration's request for this program for FY 2001. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. We are inviting applications before an appropriation for FY 2001 in order to allow enough time to consider holding two grant competition cycles in FY 2001.

ESTIMATED RANGE OF AWARDS: The size of the awards will be commensurate with the nature and scope of the work proposed. In the most recent FIS competition, the grant awards ranged from approximately \$270,000 (for 18 months) to about \$1,740,000 (for 36 months).

BUDGET PERIOD: 12-month period.

PROJECT PERIOD: 12 to 36 months.

NOTE: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86 (part 86 applies to IHEs only), 97, 98, and 99. (b) The regulations in 34 CFR part 700.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The FIS Education Research Grant Program is highly competitive. Strong applications for FIS grants clearly address each of the applicable selection criteria. They make a well-reasoned and compelling case for the national significance of the problems or issues that will be the subject of the proposed

research, and present a research design that is complete, clearly delineated, and incorporates sound research methods. In addition, the personnel descriptions included in strong applications make it apparent that the project director, principal investigator, and other key personnel possess training and experience commensurate with their duties.

The project period of the grant may be from one to three years. In the application, the project period should be divided into 12-month budget periods. Each 12-month budget should be clearly delineated and justified in terms of the proposed activities.

Collaboration: We encourage collaboration in the conduct of research. For example, major research universities and institutions may collaborate with historically underrepresented institutions, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

FOR APPLICATIONS CONTACT: Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Telephone (toll free): 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (301) 470-1244. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call (toll free): 1-877-576-7734.

You may also contact ED Pubs at its web site:

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>

Or you may contact ED Pubs at its E-mail address:

Edpubs@inet.ed.gov

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA Number 84.305T.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Seresa Simpson,
Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grants Program, Office
of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of
Education, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW., room 606c, Washington, DC
20208-5510. Telephone: (202) 219-1591. E-Mail:
seresa_simpson@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format by contacting that person. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternative format the standard forms included in the application.

Electronic Access to This Document

You may view this document, as well as all other Department of Education documents published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at either of the following sites:

<http://ocfo.ed.gov/fedreg.htm>

<http://www.ed.gov/news.html>

To use the PDF, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at either of the previous sites. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498 or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at:

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html>

PROGRAM AUTHORITY: 20 U.S.C. 6031(c)(2)(B)

Dated:

C. Kent McGuire,
Assistant Secretary for Educational
Research and Improvement.

The Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant Program

What is the purpose of the program?

The Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant Program awards grants to conduct education research in which topics and methods of study are generated by the investigators.

Who can apply for a Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant?

Eligible applicants are: institutions of higher education; state and local education agencies; public and private organizations, institutions, and agencies; and individuals.

The Secretary encourages collaboration in the conduct of research. For example, researchers may collaborate with practitioners; less experienced researchers may collaborate with more experienced researchers; and major research universities and institutions may collaborate with historically underrepresented institutions, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

What are the size and duration of awards?

The project period of the grant may be from 1 to 3 years. The length of projects and the size of awards will be commensurate with the nature and scope of the work proposed.

What are the applicable regulations?

The following regulations apply: (1) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 84, 86, and 97; and (2) 34 CFR 700. (NOTE: Part 86 applies only to institutions of higher education.)

Selection Criteria

The following criteria are used to evaluate each proposal. Each criterion is weighted equally.

(1) The National Significance.

In determining the national significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- the importance of the problem or issue to be addressed.
- the potential contribution of the project to increased knowledge or understanding of education problems, issues, or effective strategies.

(2) The Quality of the Project Design.

In determining the quality of the proposed project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- whether a specific research design has been proposed, and the quality and appropriateness of that design, including the scientific rigor of the studies involved.
- the extent to which the research design includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for research activities, and the use of appropriate theoretical and methodological tools, including those of a variety of disciplines, where appropriate.

(3) The Quality and Potential Contributions of Personnel.

In determining the quality and potential contribution of the proposed personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- the qualifications, including training and experience of:
 - (a) the project director;
 - (b) key project personnel; and
 - (c) any proposed consultants or subcontractors.

How to Apply

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: September 15, 2000

Letter of Intent

A Letter of Intent is optional, but encouraged, for each proposal. The Letter of Intent should be submitted by e-mail to: seresa_simpson@ed.gov by August 18, 2000. Receipt of the Letter of Intent will be acknowledged by e-mail.

The Letter of Intent should not exceed one page in length and should:

- include a title and brief description of the research project,
- identify the PI and any known Co-PIs,
- indicate the institution affiliations of the PI and Co-PIs,
- indicate the duration of the proposed project, and
- provide an estimated budget request by year, and a total budget request.

The applicant should also check one of the review panels on the “Checklist,” indicating which review panel would be most appropriate for the proposed research study.

The Letter of Intent is for OERI planning purposes and will not be used in the evaluation of the proposal.

Checklist for Letter of Intent

Applications submitted under the Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant Program (FIS) will compete under one general competition coordinated by OERI’s five Research Institutes: National Institute on Student Achievement, Curriculum, and Assessment; National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students; National Institute on Educational Governance, Finance, Policymaking, and Management; National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education; National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning.

- ___ Early Childhood Development and Education (including pre-kindergartens & public schools, childcare and Head Start analyses, school readiness, young children with disabilities, and parental involvement)
- ___ Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Reading and Humanities (including studies addressing English language arts, arts education, and social studies)
- ___ Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Mathematics and Science

- ___ Learning, Teaching and Assessment with Technology
- ___ Whole School Improvement and School Restructuring /Reform
- ___ Social Context of Schooling (including research on family, peer and community issues, school and classroom characteristics and community/parent involvement)
- ___ Policy, Governance, Finance and Management Issues (including school, district, state and federal levels and leadership)
- ___ Adult/Lifelong Learning (including basic skills education, workplace and recurrent learning and technology utilization)
- ___ Postsecondary Education (including curriculum, learning and assessment, and labor market)
- ___ Teaching Quality (including teaching preparation, recruitment, induction, and professional development)
- ___ Teaching, Learning and Assessment for Culturally Diverse and English Language Learners
- ___ Other _____

PLEASE DESCRIBE

General Information

Applications submitted under the Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant Program (FIS) will compete under one general competition. When the peer review process is completed, and grants are awarded, each grant will be assigned to and monitored by a staff member of one of the five National Research Institutes.

Applicants should carefully review all the instructions in this application and the selection criteria. **Applications are evaluated solely on the basis of these criteria.** Experience shows that high-scoring applications propose a strong research project of national significance and that the applications themselves address each selection criterion fully.

Strong applications make a reasoned and compelling case for the national significance of the problem or issues that will be the subject of the proposed research. The design of the work to be carried out is complete and clearly delineated, incorporating sound research methods and appropriate statistical techniques. The personnel descriptions included in the application make apparent that the project director, principal investigator, and other key personnel possess training and experience commensurate with their duties. The requested budget is also clearly delineated and justified in terms of the proposed activities and key personnel's time commitment to the project.

Application Format and Length

All applications must include: title page form, narrative, vitae for principal investigator(s) and other key personnel, GEPA 427 statement, budget summary form, and budget narrative.

Applicants must include this information in order to receive funding under the FIS program.

Applicants may provide other relevant information, including pertinent exhibits, but each application must be a self-contained document.

Only the materials included in the application at the time of submission will be sent to the review panel.

The application narrative must not exceed a total of 20 double-spaced pages, with printing on only one side of 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper. All pages in excess of the 20-page narrative maximum will be removed unread and returned to the applicant.

We strongly encourage applicants to use a 12 point or larger size font, and one-inch margins. We have found that reviewers are able to conduct the highest quality review when applications are concise and easy to read, with pages consecutively numbered.

The application should not be bound or enclosed in a folder. The preferred method is to clip or staple the application. All sections of the application, and all appendices or attachments must be suitable for photocopying in order to be included in the materials given to the reviewers.

Content of Each Section of the Application

All applications for research grants must include:

- **Title Page Form**

Use the Title Page Form (included within this package) as the cover for each copy of your application. Follow the instructions for completing the form included in this application package. Be sure to include an abstract of your proposed research project in the space provided. If your application is funded, this abstract may be sent to your congressional representatives as a description of your project. It may also be the basis of a public announcement about the grant awards. **Be sure that the certifying representative of your institution signs this Title Page Form.**

- **Narrative**

A narrative (not to exceed 20 double-spaced pages) that addresses the following:

- The research question and its significance;
- A high quality review of the pertinent literature that provides a rationale for what is proposed;

- Description of the methodology and analytical techniques;
- Importance of findings; and
- Descriptions of relevant qualifications of proposed personnel commensurate with project responsibilities.

- **Personnel**

Be sure to include vitae of principal investigator(s) and other key personnel. Vitae do not count against the 20-page limitation of the application narrative.

- **GEPA 427**

Provide a brief description separate from the narrative.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) requires applicants to include in their proposal a succinct description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. GEPA 427 highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you can determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries from such access or participation.

Your description need not be lengthy. However, you must identify barriers to access or participation, and provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. This information should be provided in a statement separate from the research narrative.

GEPA 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of the civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve high standards. An applicant may use the federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

- **Budget and Budget Narrative**

A complete budget for each year of the project must be included (use the Budget Summary Form in this package, or a suitable facsimile). Projects may be funded for 1 to 3 years.

Each 12-month budget should be clearly delineated and justified in terms of the proposed activities. A separate budget narrative must be provided to justify each line item in the completed Budget Summary form. Please include key personnel's time commitment to the project.

The budget and budget narrative do not count against the 20-page limitation of the application narrative.

NOTE: Successful applicants may be asked to provide more detailed budget information.

Number of Copies

All applicants are *required* to submit one signed original and two copies of the application. Applicants are *requested* to submit five additional copies of the entire application. The reviewers will use these copies. Each copy of the application must include a Title Page Form.

Instructions for Completing the Title Page Form

Do not forget to have the Title Page Form signed by the authorized representative.

ITEM 1. D-U-N-S NUMBER: Enter the applicant's D-U-N-S number. If your organization does not have a D-U-N-S number, you can obtain the number by calling 1-800-333-0505 or by completing a D-U-N-S Number Request Form. This service is free. The form can be obtained via the Internet at the following URL: <http://www.dnb.com/dunsno/whereduns.htm#own>

ITEM 2. LEGAL APPLICANT: Enter the name and complete mailing address of the organization, agency, or individual that will serve as the legal applicant. When more than one organization or agency is involved, enter the name of the one which will be responsible for budget control. NOTE: Acknowledgments of grant awards are sent to this address. Remember to fully complete this section.

ITEM 3. PROJECT DIRECTOR: Enter the name and complete mailing address of the Project Director or Co-Directors. If no one has been selected, so indicate and enter the name of the person who can be contacted to discuss the programmatic aspects of the project. NOTE: The name and address listed here will be used to mail notifications of application status. Do not forget to include the telephone number. Both this address and the Legal Applicant address should be detailed. Remember to complete this section fully.

ITEM 4. FEDERAL FUNDS REQUESTED: Enter the amount of federal funds being requested in each year of the project. Under "TOTAL" enter the cumulative amount requested for the duration of the project.

ITEM 5. DURATION OF THE PROJECT: Enter appropriate starting and ending dates.

ITEM 6. APPLICATION TITLE: Self-explanatory.

ITEM 7. BRIEF ABSTRACT OF APPLICATION: Keep concise and substantive. Indicate major outcomes of the work and expected contributions to theory or practice.

ITEM 8. HUMAN SUBJECTS: If research activities involving human subjects are **not planned at any time** during the proposed project, check "No." The remaining parts of item 8 are then not applicable.

If research activities involving human subjects, whether or not exempt from federal regulations for the protection of human subjects, **are planned at any time** during the proposed project period, either at the applicant organization or at any other performance site or collaborating institution, check **“Yes.”** If the research activities are designated to be exempt under the regulations, enter, in item 8a, the exemption number(s) corresponding to one or more of the six exemption categories listed in **“PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH”** attached to this form. Provide sufficient information in the application to allow a determination that the designated exemptions are appropriate.

If the planned research activities involving human subjects are covered (not exempt), complete the remaining parts of item 8 and follow the instructions in **“PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH”** attached to this form. If the applicant organization has an approved Multiple Project Assurance of Compliance on file with the Grants Policy and Oversight Staff (GPOS), U.S. Department of Education (ED), or with the Office for Protection from Research Risks (OPRR), National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that covers the specific activity, enter the assurance number in item 8b and the date of approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the proposed activities in item 8c. This date must be no earlier than one year before the receipt date for which the application is submitted and must include the four digit year (e.g., 2000). Check the type of IRB review in the appropriate box. An IRB may review an application through an expedited review procedure only if it complies with Section 97.110 of the human subjects regulations 34 CFR 97. If the IRB review is unavoidably delayed beyond the submission of the application, enter **“Pending”** in item 8c. A follow-up certification of IRB approval from an official signing for the applicant organization must then be sent to and received by the designated ED official. The certification must be received within 30 days of a specific formal request from the designated ED official. The certification must include: the PR Award number, title of the project from item 6, name of the principal investigator, project director, fellow, or other, institution, Multiple Assurance number, date of IRB approval, and appropriate signatures.

If the applicant organization does not have on file with GPOS or OPRR an approved Assurance of Compliance that covers the proposed research activity, enter **“None”** in item 8b. In this case, the applicant organization, by the signature on the application, is declaring that it will comply with 34 CFR 97 within 30 days of a specific formal request from the designated ED official.

For additional instructions regarding proposals that involve human subjects research see, **“PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH”** attached to this form.

ITEM 9. CERTIFICATION BY AUTHORIZING OFFICIAL: Enter the name, title, and telephone number of the official who has the authority both to commit the legal applicant to accept federal funding and to execute the proposed project. Submit the original ink-signed copy of the authorizing official’s signature.

Instructions for Completing the Budget Summary Form

A. Direct Costs

1. Salaries (professional and clerical): Show salaries and wages to be paid to personnel employed in the project. Fees and expenses for consultants must be included in item A6.
2. Employee Benefits: Include contributions for Social Security, employee insurance, pension plans, and the like. Leave blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost rate.
3. Employee Travel: Indicate the amount requested for travel of employees. **Please include round-trip travel to Washington, DC, for a project director's meeting each year.**
4. Equipment (purchase): Indicate the cost of nonexpendable personal property which has a useful life of more than 2 years. Provide per unit costs in the budget narrative.
5. Materials and Supplies: Include the cost of consumable supplies and materials to be used in the project.
6. Consultants and Contracts: Show the amount to be used for:
 - (a) subgrants or payments for consultants and secondary recipient organizations such as affiliates and cooperating institutions; and
 - (b) procurement contracts (except those which are included on the lines for supplies and for equipment).

7. Other (such as equipment rental, printing): Indicate all other direct costs not covered in lines 1 through 6.
8. Total Direct Costs: Show totals for lines 1 through 7.

B. Indirect Costs

Indicate the amount of indirect costs to be charged to the program or project.
Explain the indirect cost rate and base in the budget narrative.

C. Total

Add lines A8 and B.

Please note that these items should be completed for each year of the budget request.

ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Applicants selected for funding will be required to submit the following before a grant is issued:

- A signed Form ED 80-0013 (“Certifications Regarding Lobbying’, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements”);
- Standard Form SF 424B (“Assurances—Non-Construction Programs”; and
- Standard Form LLL (“Disclosure of Lobbying Activities”).

Grant awards cannot be made until these signed forms are received. (Forms will be issued to applicants who are selected for funding.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TRANSMITTING APPLICATIONS

All applications must be postmarked or hand delivered **by September 15, 2000**. The closing date and procedures for guaranteeing timely submission will be strictly observed.

Applications Sent by Mail

Applications must be mailed on or before the deadline date to:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Room 3633
ATTN: CFDA 84.305T
Washington, DC 20202-4725

Applications received after the deadline date will not be considered for funding unless the applicant can show one of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) a legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark;
- (2) a legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal service
- (3) a dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier; or
- (4) any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary.

If you mail an application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A mail receipt that is dated by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

An applicant should note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office.

Each late applicant will be notified that its application will not be considered.

If You deliver Your Application by Hand

You or your courier must hand deliver your application by 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time) on or before the deadline date to:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attn: (CFDA #305T)
Regional Office Building 3, Room 3633
7th and D Streets SW

**Contact for the
Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant
Program**

If you have questions about this application, please contact:

Seresa Simpson
(202) 219-1935
E-mail: seresa_simpson@ed.gov

Tip Sheet

The following “tips” are offered to help applicants improve the quality of their applications.

1. The reviewers of your application will evaluate it according to three selection criteria: the National Significance, the Quality of the Project Design, and the Quality and Potential Contributions of Personnel. We have found that high quality applications thoroughly address **each** of the three selection criteria. Also, high quality applications are often organized around these three criteria.

- **National Significance.** It has been our experience that high quality applications in the past tend to **explain** why proposed research is of critical national significance. Writers of high quality applications do not assume that the reviewers will automatically conclude that the issue being addressed is of great significance. Writers must make the case. Under “National Significance,” the selection criteria call for applicants to address the importance of the problem or issue to be addressed and the potential contribution of the project to increased knowledge or understanding of education problems, issues, or effective strategies. When addressing these factors, we have found that high quality applications deal, as appropriate, with such issues as: how the findings will help improve education, how the findings are generalizable beyond the study sites, and how the findings will be disseminated.
- **Quality of the Project Design.** We have found in the past that writers of high quality applications tend to **explain** the design and methodology they propose to use; they tend to explain why this approach is particularly appropriate for the work they are proposing; and they tend to stress the scientific rigor of the research by demonstrating how it will yield particularly credible findings. Such applications discuss, as appropriate to the work, such issues as: the theoretical foundations for your proposed research; the study design (e.g., how and why particular samples will be chosen, how controls will be introduced); and the analysis techniques that will be employed (and why these techniques are particularly appropriate).
- **Personnel.** It has been our experience in the past, that, when discussing “The Quality and Potential Contributions of Personnel,” writers of high quality applications **explain** how the expertise of key personnel is well-suited to the proposed work.

Furthermore, less experienced applicants are encouraged to strengthen the personnel section of their application by collaborating with more experienced personnel by including them as appropriate as advisors or consultants to the project.

2. Conduct a mock review of your application before you submit it. Experienced research firms use this technique to improve the quality of their applications. Find experts in the field to review your application according to the published evaluation criteria. Use individuals who have not seen the application before and who have not discussed the work with you (so they will be seeing it for the first time like other reviewers). Use the results of this mock review to strengthen your application before you submit it.

3. Finally, we wish to stress that OERI's Field-Initiated Studies Education Grant Program supports only education research.

Things to Check Before You Mail Your Application

Make sure that:

- ❖ Title page form has been completed according to the instructions in this package;
- ❖ The human subjects (item #8 of the title page form) is complete; and
- ❖ The title page form has been signed and dated by the certifying representative and the signed original has been included in your submission to the U.S. Department of Education.

Your application package should include:

- ❖ One original plus two copies. (Five additional copies are requested but are not required.) Each copy should be organized as follows:
 - the title page form (application cover page);
 - the narrative;
 - vitae of principal investigator(s) and key personnel;
 - GEPA 427 Statement; and
 - the budget summary form and a detailed budget narrative.

The application should be clipped or stapled, *not* bound, or enclosed in a folder.

Mail to: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Room 3633, Regional Office Building 3, ATTN: CFDA 84.305T; Washington, DC 20202-4725.

**Important Notice to Prospective Participants
in U.S. Department of Education
Grant and Contract Programs**

Applicants for grants from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) have to compete for limited funds.

Deadlines assure all applicants that they will be treated fairly and equally, without last minute haste. For these reasons, ED must set strict deadlines for grant applications. Prospective applicants can avoid disappointment if they understand that.

Failure to meet a deadline will mean that an application will be rejected without any consideration.

The rules, including the deadline, for applying for each grant are published individually in the Federal Register. A one-year subscription to the Register may be obtained by sending \$555.00 to Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9371. (Send check or money order only, no cash or stamps.)

The instructions in the Federal Register must be followed exactly. Do not accept any other advice you may receive. No ED employees are authorized to extend any deadline published in the Federal Register.

Questions regarding submission of applications may be addressed to:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Washington, DC 20202-4725

Contracts

Competitive procurement actions undertaken by the ED are governed by the Federal Procurement Regulation and implementing ED Procurement Regulation.

Generally, prospective competitive procurement actions are synopsized in the Commerce Business Daily (CBD). Prospective offerors are therein advised of the nature of the procurement and where to apply for copies of the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Offerors are advised to be guided solely by the contents of the CBD synopsis and the instructions contained in the RFP. Questions regarding the submission of offers should be addressed to the Contracts Specialist identified on the face page of the RFP.

Offers are judged in competition with others, and failure to conform with any substantive requirements of the RFP will result in rejection of the offer without any consideration whatever.

Do not accept any advice you receive that is contrary to instructions contained in either the CBD synopsis or the RFP. No ED employee is authorized to consider a proposal which is non-responsive to the RFP.

A subscription to the CBD is available for \$208.00 per year via second class mailing or \$261.00 per year via first class mailing. Information included in the Federal Acquisition Regulation is contained in Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1 (\$49.00). The foregoing publication may be obtained by sending your check or money order only, no cash or stamps, to: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9371.

In an effort to be certain this important information is widely disseminated, this notice is being included in all ED mail to the public. You may, therefore, receive more than one notice. If you do, we apologize for any annoyance it may cause you.

ED Form 5348,8/92

GRANT APPLICATION RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

If you fail to receive the notification of application receipt within 15 days from the closing date, contact:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
(202) 708-9493

GRANT AND CONTRACT FUNDING INFORMATION

The U.S. Department of Education provides information about grant and contract opportunities electronically in two ways:

ED Web Site: <http://ed.gov/>

OCFO Web Site: <http://ocfo.ed.gov/>